that area. We are going ahead with the action and whoever is found guilty will be punished.

I agree there were some irregularities found against the safety department. We have referred it to the Prime Minister's office. Regarding irregularities in foreign exchange also, we have sent it to the Prime Minister's office for taking further action.

I do accept there is a revenue leakage in the Department. That is why I wrote to the hon. Home Minister and CBI to keep a watch on our Department by the CBI. We will pay whatever charges they take from us. In this way we are tightening the vigilance side. We are also trying to create a separate vigilance cell in each region and department. But this might take a long time to select the officers and impart training to them. That is why we have asked the CBI to look after the whole department. We do not mind paying them whatever they charge so that a close look at the Department can be kept by the CBI.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No. 122.

Plots to non-resident Indians in Delhi

*122. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH: HANSPAL:

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:†

Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several Non-Resident Indians have urged Government for providing them with residential plots in the Capital on payment in foreign currency;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) by when a decision is likely to be taken thereon?

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†The question was asked on the floor of the House by Shri Krishna Kumar Birla.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A scheme for allotment of residential plots to NRIs in Delhi was launched by the Government in 1976. It was discontinued in 1981. Some request for revival of the earlier scheme have been received. There is no proposal for revival of the scheme. However, considering the need to secure foreign exchange for the country, a scheme to attract NRI's for investment is under consideration.

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Sir, in my opinion the Government's reply is satisfactory. The allegation was that the Government has advertised for land allotment scheme through the Indian missions abroad. They have accepted earnest money in foreign exchange. Then the Government went back. That is the allegation. I also understand that NRIs have gone to the court and lost the case. As the NRIs lost the case, the Government's stand has been vindicated. This is one side of the story. The other side is that most NRIs are middle class professionals like doctors, chartered accountants, engineers, etc., they went abroad for a few years and now they want to come back and settle down in their home land. They are also prepared to pay the cost of land in foreign exchange. My question is: (a) How many applications have the Government received from NRIs for land allotment? (b) Just as DDA has evolved a scheme for co-operative societies, will DDA evolve a scheme for NRIs also? (c) How long it will take for DDA to finalise such a scheme?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL): Sir, the hon. Member has already given the details of the scheme that was formulated in the year 1976. Eventually it did not come into being. After that why that scheme has been withdrawn, I would like to explain.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You come to the present.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: The present is that there are certain cases still pending. On the 5th December,....

MR. CHAIRMAN: His question is simple. Will you consider allotting house sites to the NRIs if they pay the cost of the land in foreign exchange?

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: It was considered. The foreign exchange will be welcomed here. But the whole programme fizzled out because...

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was in 1981. But what happened from 1991 onwards?

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: I am not talking of the future. Are you evolving a scheme for the NRIs if they pay the cost of land in foreign exchange? The DDA has evolved a scheme for the cooperative societies. Are they prepared to evolve a scheme for NRIs also who are prepared to pay the cost of land in foreign exchange?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now you are accepting foreign exchange from NRIs for putting up a factory. Similarly, will you allot them house sites if they pay the cost of land in foreign exchange?

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: We are thinking on those lines and we want to have foreign exchange. And we want to have foreign exchange in this connection and we will also like to build houses for the NRIs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If they are built with their foreign exchange, what is the harm?

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: We want to build houses for them. But we cannot give them the land. We have not got as much land as they want. So we want to construct houses for them and hand them over to them.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Sir, the Minister has just said that in view of the acute foreign exchange shortage, they are thinking seriously on the lines of creating some proposals by which foreign exchange can come in. I would like to know from the Government what steps they are going to take to see that such schemes are not misused and that there is a uniform national policy. For example, in Karnataka, the then Chief Minister Mr. Hegde had evolved a scheme which led to gross misuse and the Justice Kuldip Commission had highlighted how black money in this country was being in fact, utilised through the 'havala' to be brought back for purchase of land. Now, such things should not happen and the State Governments should not be free to have their own schemes. Is the Government thinking in terms of effective safeguards and also evolving a national policy so that the State Governments or shall I say delinquent State Chief Ministers, do not misuse this project?

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: The scheme for inducing the NRIs on a national level is being worked out. In this connection, we want to sort out the problems of the NRIs. That will be on a national level, as I said, and general exemption of NRIs from the requirement of RBI approval under the FERA may be elaborated and built into scheme guidelines to enable automatic clearance. Then, we have another proposal that no approval may be required for the renting of properties by NRIs or for transfer of title, inheritance or gifting as long as it involves no repatriation of receipts and so on. There are a number of schemes. If you like me to, Sir, I can read out two or three more.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please lay it on the Table of the House.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: All right, Sir.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are two parts of this question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are three parts, (a), (b) and (c).

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: As far as I understand, regarding foreign exchange, if a person comes on transfer of resi-

dence, 50 per cent of whatever foreign exchange he has got in bank accounts is converted into rupee currency and 50 per cent is kept in foreign currency. It is only for medical and foreign tour purposes. From that money, they cannot raise any foreign exchange for this purposes. Sir, I would like to know whether the Government will take up this with the Finance Ministry. For, suppose a person goes abroad and brings TV sets or something like that. That money is converted into that. Instead, if they are allowed that this foreign exchange can also be utilised for the purpose of housing, then, they will not bring such things. They will keep deposits in NRI accounts and foreign exchange will be accumulated for us. That is why I would like to know whether the Minister will take up this with the Finance Ministry to review this position. And for this purpose... (*Interruptions*)... foreign exchange which has been frozen can be allowed.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: Sir, I feel that this question should be referred to the Finance Ministry.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: You want foreign exchange. Your Ministry also has to cooperate.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Sir, our quest for foreign exchange has been fairly indiscriminate putting into jeopardy some very vital national interests already. Now, what I want to know from the Minister is this. Whatever may be her perception as to the need of the foreign exchange of the country, the Finance Ministry is already doing havoc.

श्री सभापति : आप जमीन के बारे में पूछिए, लंबे में मत जाइए . . . (**व्यवधान**)

श्री एन०के०पी० साल्वे : जब तक बात क्या है, साफ नहीं होगी . . . (**व्यवधान**)

श्री सभापति : बात साफ है।

श्री एन०के०पी० साल्वे : धन्यवाद, साहब, मैं सवाल पर आता हूं . . .

Doctors, engineers, technicians, scientists, as Mr. Birla said, . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: And Chartered Accountants.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: . . . and Chartered Accountants who worked abroad and made plenty of money, when coming into India, may be accommodated. Equally, there is need for lawyers, chartered accountants and scientists working in India. All that I want to know is, in your scheme which you have in your contemplation, you want to give the house, not the land to the NRIs; it is a good idea. You give a house. I want to know whether you intend giving any concessional prices because that will be deleterious in my opinion. What needs to be done is, we fix up the price and on that price, if someone comes and pays foreign exchange, well and good. Otherwise, all that I want to say is, it would be highly discriminatory. In fact, it will again also have the ramifications of people buying foreign exchange abroad and buying houses here. Therefore, to put an end to this racket, would you in your scheme ensure that you determine the market price and then don't sell anything at concessional rate? Of course, in the allotment, you may give preference to those who give foreign exchange.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What he says is, don't reduce the price for them. You can give them priority.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: Sir, that was the reason why the previous plan that was for the NRIs could not go through because the cost of land was only Rs. 200 per square yard. So it was not enough and then we were told by the Government that we have to have the equal cost of land for everybody and the NRIs should not get preferential treatment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is what he has said. In allotment, you can give preference. No law will come in the way.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: That we will see.